WHAT MAKES A CAREER-TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM EXEMPLARY?

A RUBRIC FOR SECONDARY-LEVEL PROGRAMS

**DEVELOPED BY THE
NATIONAL DISSEMINATION CENTER
FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
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A: Program Quality, Criterion 1:
Program goals and objectives are clear, challenging, and appropriate for the intended population.

STRUGGLING PROGRAM	IMPROVING PROGRAM	PROMISING PROGRAM	EXEMPLARY PROGRAM
(a) No program goals in place	(a) Some program goals are evident; however, goals may not be clear or appropriate for the target population	(a) Program goals are mostly clear and appropriate for the target population	(a) Program goals are clear, challenging, and appropriate for the learner population
(b) Program goals are not based on current research or successful practice in CTE	(b) Some program goals appear to be based on research or successful practice in CTE	(b) Most program goals appear to be based on research and successful practice in CTE	(b) Program goals are clearly based on current research and successful practice in CTE
(c) Program goals do not reflect high expectations for student achievement	(c) Program goals are somewhat challenging in regard to student achievement	(c) Program goals reflect high expectations for the majority of students enrolled	(c) Program goals clearly reflect high expectations for *all* students enrolled in the program
(d) Program goals do not address higher-order thinking skills or problem solving	(d) Some goals address higher-order thinking skills or problem solving	(d) Higher-order thinking skills and problem solving are implied by project goals	(d) Program goals clearly and specifically address the development of higher-order thinking skills and problem solving

Program Quality, Criterion 2:
The program content is aligned with learning goals, and is accurate, current, and appropriate for the intended population.

STRUGGLING PROGRAM	IMPROVING PROGRAM	PROMISING PROGRAM	EXEMPLARY PROGRAM
(a) Program has outdated technology that is no longer used in industry; students do not have the opportunity to learn about state-of-the-art technology in their field	(a) Program has access to some current technology; students have some understanding of technological advances in their field	(a) Program has current technology that reflects industry norms; students can articulate technological trends that affect the field	(a) Program clearly uses state-of-the-art technology based on industry trends; students possess deep understanding of technological advances in their field
(b) Program does not have the necessary resources or materials to provide a positive learning environment	(b) Program has some resources and materials that provide an adequate learning environment	(b) Program has many high quality resources and materials that contribute to a positive learning environment	(b) Program has a wealth of resources and materials to provide a rich learning environment for students
(c.1) Curriculum materials are not culturally or ethnically inclusive or free of bias	(c.1) Some curriculum materials are culturally inclusive and free of bias	(c.1) Most curriculum materials reflect the diversity of the learner population and are free of bias	(c.1) All curriculum materials are culturally inclusive and respectful of a variety of demographic groups
(c.2) Instruction does not accommodate diverse learning styles	(c.2) Instructional methods are somewhat varied, based on limited knowledge of students' learning styles	(c.2) Instructional methods appear to be based on knowledge of students' learning styles and preferences	(c.2) Instructional methods clearly accommodate students' learning styles, based on research and best practices
(d.1) Students do not have the opportunity to develop a deep understanding of all aspects of the industry	(d.1) Students have some opportunities to learn about all aspects of the industry within the program	(d.1) Students regularly learn about all aspects of the industry within the program	(d.1) Students have multiple high-quality experiences that contribute to a deep understanding of all aspects of the industry
(d.2) Students have no work-based learning opportunities	(d.2) Students have a few work-based learning opportunities	(d.2) Students have several work-based learning options	(d.2) Work-based learning is a key component of the program

Program Quality, Criterion 3:
The program reflects the vision promoted in recognized academic and occupational standards and by state and national legislation, as appropriate.

STRUGGLING PROGRAM	IMPROVING PROGRAM	PROMISING PROGRAM	EXEMPLARY PROGRAM
(a.1) Program has not earned certification recognized by industry and professional or trade associations, or state licensing boards	(a.1) Program is working toward certification in at least one area	(a.1) Program has recently earned certification in one or more areas	(a.1) Program may have been one of the first of its kind to earn certification or has earned multiple certifications at multiple levels
(a.2) Students do not have the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials during the program	(a.2) Students will soon have the opportunity to earn certification in at least one area	(a.2) Students have at least one credentialing option available during the program	(a.2) Students have multiple credentialing options in high-demand industry areas
(b) Program curriculum is not aligned with appropriate *academic* standards	(b) Some academic standards within one discipline are aligned; however, these may not be at grade level	(b) Curriculum is aligned with grade-level academic standards in at least one discipline area	(b) Program curriculum is aligned with grade-level academic standards at the state or national level in at least two disciplines
(c) Program curriculum is not aligned with appropriate state or national *skill* standards	(c) Curriculum addresses some state or national skill standards; however, these may be outdated	(c) Curriculum is aligned with state-identified or endorsed competencies for this industry area	(c) Curriculum is clearly aligned with state and/or national skill standards as determined by industry experts
(d) Program does not address employability skills (SCANS)	(d) Employability skills are addressed as an "add-on" to the program	(d) SCANS skills are addressed through student projects, lessons, and curriculum materials	(d) SCANS skills are clearly integrated into the curriculum, teaching methods, and student expectations
(e) Program has never been recognized for student achievements, teacher quality, or program outcomes	(e) Some components of the program have been recognized within the school for quality, student achievement, or outcomes	(e) Program has been recognized at the state or local level for student achievement, teacher quality, or program excellence	(e) Program has been recognized nationally for program excellence, student achievement, and quality

Program Quality, Criterion 4:

Collaborations with internal and external organizations and stakeholders are maintained to strengthen the quality and effectiveness of the program.

STRUGGLING PROGRAM	IMPROVING PROGRAM	PROMISING PROGRAM	EXEMPLARY PROGRAM
(a) Program does not involve business/industry with program development, curriculum, workplace learning experiences, or program improvement	(a) The program has an advisory committee that meets once or twice a year to provide input on program improvement, curriculum, and work-based experiences	(a) Business and industry are frequently requested to provide input on program development, curriculum, work-based learning, and program improvement	(a) Business and industry are extensively involved in tangible, meaningful ways regarding program development, curriculum, work-based learning experiences, and program improvement
(b) Program has no partnership agreements that address program goals, or, existing agreements are not implemented effectively	(b) Partnerships with internal and external groups have had some impact on program quality and student achievement	(b) Program partners with at least one external organization in ways that enhance program quality and student achievement	(b) Multiple partnerships with internal/external groups clearly contribute significantly to program quality and student achievement
(c.1) School and community leaders do not support the program in tangible ways	(c.1) School and community leaders express verbal or written support for the program	(c.1) School and community leaders allocate resources to the program that enhance the program quality and effectiveness	(c.1) School and community leaders' support for the program clearly contributes to program quality in tangible ways
(c.2) The program does not contribute to whole school improvement	(c.2) The program's teachers participate in whole school improvement strategies	(c.2) The program's content is aligned with whole school improvement	(c.2) The program design and content are clearly an integral part of whole school improvement
(d) The program is not part of a well-developed career pathway that includes both secondary and postsecondary levels	(d) The program leads to at least one career pathway at the postsecondary level	(d) The program is part of a system that leads to career pathways at the associate-degree level	(d) The program is clearly a vital component of multiple career pathways at the secondary and postsecondary levels, including 2- and 4-yr. colleges

B: Educational Significance, Criterion 1:
The program addresses important individual and societal needs.

STRUGGLING PROGRAM	IMPROVING PROGRAM	PROMISING PROGRAM	EXEMPLARY PROGRAM
(a) The program does not cover enough material or does not have enough time to make a positive difference in student learning	(a) The program covers a great deal of material, but students do not have enough time to learn content in depth	(a) The program covers a significant amount of content, and has evidence that students develop proficiency regarding the content	(a) The program's design ensures that students develop both academic and technical skills that enable students to reach important learning goals
(b) The program does nothing to prepare students to be productive citizens and community members	(b) The program's goals include the expectation that students become productive citizens and community members	(b) The program is designed to ensure that students become productive citizens and community members	(b) The program has evidence that students become productive citizens and community members after completing the program
(c) The program does not address local workforce needs or the needs of the community	(c) Some of the program's students participate in service learning projects, or eventually become employed in related areas	(c) The program is designed to contribute to local workforce and community needs	(c) The program has evidence that it contributes to economic development and community needs
(d) The program does nothing to support equity and diversity among students, or to encourage non-traditional student enrollment	(d) The program has made specific efforts to encourage non-traditional student enrollments or to address diversity issues through the curriculum	(d) The program has successfully recruited, retained, and placed nontraditional students; the program also expects students to be respectful of diverse cultures	(d) The program clearly addresses equity and diversity issues among students as evidenced by student projects, curriculum materials, and program outreach, enrollment, retention, and completion rates of non-traditional students

Educational Significance, Criterion 2:

The program contributes to educational excellence for all learners, and leads to other positive results or outcomes.

STRUGGLING PROGRAM	IMPROVING PROGRAM	PROMISING PROGRAM	EXEMPLARY PROGRAM
(a) There is no evidence that *all* students are held to high expectations; many students are not expected to achieve at high levels simply because of their ethnic background, gender, socioeconomic class, or special needs status	(a) Students are expected to achieve at high levels; however, few support systems are in place to ensure that students can achieve at high levels	(a) All students are expected to achieve at high levels, and some support mechanisms are in place so that students who need help can get it	(a) The program not only is explicit in the expectation that *all* students are held to high standards, but the program also has support systems in place to ensure that all students *do* achieve at high levels
(b) Teachers gain nothing from teaching this program in regard to becoming master teachers; there are no opportunities for the program's teachers to gain new skills in the teaching profession	(b) The program's teachers are clearly committed to their students and their program; however, the school system does not seem to support the teachers' professional growth	(b) The program's teachers have had many opportunities to extend their teaching skills through this program or with this school system	(b) The program's teachers have become expert teachers through working with this program; the teachers have had multiple opportunities to expand their skills as professionals
(c) Compared to other programs in similar settings, this program is of low quality and has poor outcomes	(c) Compared to other programs in similar settings, this program appears to be performing at an average level; there are few aspects of this program that are worthy of replication	(c) Compared to other programs in similar settings, this program appears to be of high quality, and has many notable components that could be adapted in other settings	(c) Compared to other programs of this type and in similar settings, this program clearly has evidence that its quality and outcomes are among the best in the nation

Educational Significance, Criterion 3:
The program design is innovative, reflects current research, and is worthy of replication.

STRUGGLING PROGRAM	IMPROVING PROGRAM	PROMISING PROGRAM	EXEMPLARY PROGRAM
(a) The program has not incorporated any current research into the design of the program in regard to career pathways, career clusters, academic and technical integration, competency-based credentialing, or flexible delivery to meet students' or employers' needs	(a) The program has attempted to incorporate some innovative components into the design, curriculum, or delivery of the program with limited success; the program innovations may be too new to evaluate	(a) The program has some evidence that design, curriculum, and delivery innovations are successful and contribute to increased student achievement	(a) The program is obviously innovative, and reflects current research and best practices in regard to design, curriculum, delivery, and credentialing; student achievement data clearly attests to the success of these innovations
(b) The instructional methods do not reflect any current research in regard to project-based learning, authentic assessment, critical thinking skills, integrated projects, etc.	(b) The program's instructional methods make limited use of research-based strategies; student achievement is typical for this type of program	(b) The program's instructional methods appear to be of high quality and encourage high levels of student achievement	(b) The program's instructional methods clearly align with evidence-based research on effective teaching and learning; student achievement data reflect the use of superior teaching methods
(c) Professional development provided has no connection to identified needs	(c) The program's teachers have limited opportunities to identify their professional development needs and to address those needs	(c) The program's teachers have the opportunity and capacity to drive their own professional development based on identified needs	(c) Teachers identify their own professional development needs and receive the support and resources necessary to improve their practice
(x*) Program has few (if any) components that should be replicated elsewhere	(x*) The program has some promising practices that could be used elsewhere	(x*) The program has many solid components worthy of replication at similar schools	(x*) The program clearly has outstanding components that should be replicated widely

*x identifies areas that are not specifically addressed in the indicators, but are part of the overall criterion.

C: Evidence of Effectiveness and Success, Criterion 1:
The program makes a measurable difference in learning for all participants.

STRUGGLING PROGRAM	IMPROVING PROGRAM	PROMISING PROGRAM	EXEMPLARY PROGRAM
(a) The program has no evidence that students have gained any skills in academic, technical, or employability areas	(a) The program has limited data showing student gains in academic, technical, and employability skills; or, data may not be verifiable by external assessments	(a) The program has credible data showing student gains in academic, technical, and employability skills	(a) The program has valid and reliable data showing student gains in academic, technical, and employability skills for all students over a period of several years
(b) The program has no way to demonstrate that students can perform skills required by industry	(b) Students have the option of earning industry credentials; however, only a few students demonstrate proficiency as measured by industry-based assessments	(b) Students are assessed using industry-based assessments, and many students show high levels of achievement	(b) Students' skills are consistently verified by industry-based assessments; results attest to students' high levels of competence
(c) The program has no way of showing that what students learn in the program will transfer to real-world settings	(c) The program claims that students' learning transfers to real-world settings, but provides little evidence to support this claim	(c) The program appears to have evidence that the students' learning is transferable to real-world settings	(c) The program has clear and convincing evidence that students' learning has transferred to real-world settings
(d) The program has no evidence that achievement gaps have narrowed between groups of students	(d) The program has some evidence that students are making gains in achievement across demographic groups	(d) The program has made significant progress in narrowing the achievement gap between groups of students	(d) The program has clear and credible evidence of narrowing the achievement gap between groups of students
(e) There is no connection between the program goals and outcomes	(e) The program claims to be meeting goals, but provides little evidence to support claims	(e) The program appears to be meeting its goals based on documentation provided	(e) The program has clear and convincing evidence of accomplishing the program's goals

Evidence of Effectiveness and Success, Criterion 2:
The program meets or exceeds identified performance goals.

STRUGGLING PROGRAM	IMPROVING PROGRAM	PROMISING PROGRAM	EXEMPLARY PROGRAM
(a) The program has no evidence that it meets or exceeds its program performance goals	(a) The program has limited evidence of meeting its performance goals over the past year	(a) The program has evidence that it meets its performance goals over a period of at least 2 years	(a) The program has clear and convincing evidence that it consistently meets or exceeds the performance goals over a period of at least 3 years
(b) The program's performance is significantly lower than the district's or the state's performance goals	(b) The program's performance barely meets the state's performance goals	(b) The program's performance meets and sometimes exceeds the state's performance goals	(b) The program's performance clearly and consistently exceeds all aspects of the state's performance goals
(c) The program has no evidence that it meets performance measures in regard to student enrollment, achievement, retention, or placement	(c) The program has some evidence that it meets performance measures regarding student enrollment, achievement, retention, placement, and follow-up	(c) The program has clear evidence that it meets performance measures regarding student enrollment, achievement, retention, placement, and follow-up	(c) The program has clear evidence that it consistently exceeds performance measures regarding student achievement, enrollment, retention, placement, and long-term follow-up
(d) The program's performance rates are never shared with potential students, parents, employers, school leaders, or community members	(d) The program shares some aspects of its performance rates with stakeholders who request this information	(d) The program shares its performance rates with many key stakeholders, such as potential students and employers	(d) There is clear evidence that the program frequently shares its performance rates with potential students, parents, employers, school leaders, and community members

Evidence of Effectiveness and Success, Criterion 3:
A systematic evaluation process is used to continuously improve the program.

STRUGGLING PROGRAM	IMPROVING PROGRAM	PROMISING PROGRAM	EXEMPLARY PROGRAM
(a) The program has no valid or reliable measures to evaluate student or program performance	(a) The program collects student and program performance data, but does not use the data to drive program improvement	(a) The program evaluates student and program performance to improve the program on a regular basis	(a) The program clearly uses valid and reliable measures to evaluate student and program performance in an on-going, continuous improvement process
(b) Employers, associate schools, postsecondary representatives, community members, and parents are not asked to provide feedback for program improvement	(b) The program occasionally asks the advisory committee to provide feedback for program improvement	(b) The program frequently encourages employers and postsecondary schools to provide feedback for program improvement	(b) The program has clear evidence that multiple stakeholders are continuously encouraged to participate in the program improvement process
(c) Students are not asked to provide feedback for program improvement	(c) Students are informally or infrequently asked to provide feedback on program quality	(c) Students' feedback on program improvement is requested at least once or twice a year	(c) The program has clear evidence that students' feedback is an integral part of the continuous improvement process
(d) Teachers have no role in identifying program needs or assessing continuous improvement strategies	(d) Teachers have a limited role in identifying program needs	(d) Teachers clearly are involved in continuous improvement strategies	(d) Teachers are always consulted in identifying program needs or strategies to improve the program
(e) The program does not use any data to drive program improvement	(e) The program's outcome data is occasionally used to drive program improvement	(e) The program appears to use credible data to drive program improvement	(e) The program regularly uses valid and reliable data to drive program improvement

D: Replicability and Usefulness to Others, Criterion 1:
The whole program or elements of the program can be successfully implemented, adopted, or adapted in other educational settings.

STRUGGLING PROGRAM	IMPROVING PROGRAM	PROMISING PROGRAM	EXEMPLARY PROGRAM
(a.1) The program's teachers never have the opportunity to participate in conferences to share their ideas and best practices	(a.1) The program's teachers have informally shared their best practices with other teachers at their school or with colleagues at similar programs in the state	(a.1) The program's teachers often have the opportunity to share ideas with their peers at their school, or occasionally present at a state-level conference	(a.1) The program has evidence that its teachers frequently have the opportunity to share their ideas and best practices with colleagues and other practitioners across the nation
(a.2) The program has no materials or other resources (e.g., a web site) to help another program adapt its best practices	(a.2) The program has a few materials that, with some additional work, could be shared with other programs	(a.2) The program has many high-quality materials that are worthy of adaptation at other program sites	(a.2) The program clearly has extensive high-quality materials that easily can be shared with other programs to adapt best practices
(b) No one knows about the good things happening in this program; therefore, no one can learn from the experience of this program's teachers	(b) The program has limited resources to inform the community or other practitioners about the program's best practices	(b) The program has a formal communication strategy in place to inform the local community of the program's outstanding performance	(b) The program has an effective system in place to market the program's best practices with practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers
(c) This program or its best practices have not been adopted in other settings	(c) This program has been identified by at least one other site for possible replication or adaptation of its best practices	(c) At least one other site has begun to adopt this program's best practices, or has attempted to replicate the program	(c) The program clearly has been successfully replicated or adapted at other settings; these replication sites have evidence of successful implementation

Exemplary Program Rubric for Secondary-Level Programs
Assessment Component

Instructions: Use the rubric to assess your CTE program(s). Based on each criterion and indicator, identify the current status of your program's effectiveness. Circle the appropriate numerical score for each of the criterion and indicators. Once you've completed your initial assessment, graph your scores on the bar charts on the following pages. Use the completed bar charts to quickly and efficiently identify your program's strengths and targets for improvement.

A: Program Quality

Criterion 1: Program Goals	Struggling	Improving	Promising	Exemplary
a	1	2	3	4
b	1	2	3	4
c	1	2	3	4
d	1	2	3	4
Criterion 2: Program Content	Struggling	Improving	Promising	Exemplary
a	1	2	3	4
b	1	2	3	4
c.1	1	2	3	4
c.2	1	2	3	4
d.1	1	2	3	4
d.2	1	2	4	4
Criterion 3: Standards	Struggling	Improving	Promising	Exemplary
a.1	1	2	3	4
a.2	1	2	3	4
b	1	2	3	4
c	1	2	3	4
d	1	2	3	4
e	1	2	3	4
Criterion 4: Partnerships/Reform	Struggling	Improving	Promising	Exemplary
a	1	2	3	4
b	1	2	3	4
c.1	1	2	3	4
c.2	1	2	3	4
d	1	2	3	4

B: Educational Significance

Criterion 1: **Individual/societal needs**	Struggling	Improving	Promising	Exemplary
a	1	2	3	4
b	1	2	3	4
c	1	2	3	4
d	1	2	3	4
Criterion 2: **Educational excellence**	Struggling	Improving	Promising	Exemplary
a	1	2	3	4
b	1	2	3	4
c	1	2	3	4
Criterion 3: **Innovation, research base, professional development, and worthiness of replication**	Struggling	Improving	Promising	Exemplary
a	1	2	3	4
b	1	2	3	4
c	1	2	3	4
x	1	2	3	4

C: Evidence of Effectiveness and Success

Criterion 1: **Student Achievement**	Struggling	Improving	Promising	Exemplary
a	1	2	3	4
b	1	2	3	4
c	1	2	3	4
d	1	2	3	4
e	1	2	3	4
Criterion 2: **Program Performance**	Struggling	Improving	Promising	Exemplary
a	1	2	3	4
b	1	2	3	4
c	1	2	3	4
d	1	2	3	4
Criterion 3: **Program evaluation and continuous improvement**	Struggling	Improving	Promising	Exemplary
a	1	2	3	4
b	1	2	3	4
c	1	2	3	4
d	1	2	3	4
e	1	2	3	4

D: Replicability and Usefulness to Others

Criterion 1: Replicability	Struggling	Improving	Promising	Exemplary
a.1	1	2	3	4
a.2	1	2	3	4
b	1	2	3	4
c	1	2	3	4

A: Program Quality

	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c.1	2c.2	2d.1	2d.2	3a.1	3a.2	3b	3c	3d	3e	4a	4b	4c.1	4c.2	4d
4																					
3																					
2																					
1																					
0																					

B: Educational Significance

	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b	3c	3x
4											
3											
2											
1											
0											

Instructions: Using your scores from the previous page, create a bar chart by shading in your scores with the corresponding criteria and indicators. Your completed bar chart will provide a quick and efficient visual representation of how you've assessed your CTE program quality. Use this chart to establish a benchmark for your program, identify strengths, and target areas for improvement. You can use this chart to check your program's progress in achieving your performance goals by periodically re-assessing your program and creating updated bar charts.

	C: Evidence of Effectiveness and Success														D: Replicability and Usefulness			
4																		
3																		
2																		
1																		
0																		
	1a	1b	1c	1d	1e	2a	2b	2c	2d	3a	3b	3c	3d	3e	1a.1	1a.2	1b	1c

Instructions: Using your scores from the previous page, create a bar chart by shading in your scores with the corresponding criteria and indicators. Your completed bar chart will provide a quick and efficient visual representation of how you've assessed your CTE program quality. Use this chart to establish a benchmark for your program, identify strengths, and target areas for improvement. You can use this chart to check your program's progress in achieving your performance goals by periodically re-assessing your program and creating updated bar charts